

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: November 16, 2012

Agenda Item: Designate Causeway Bay on Echo Lake as a No Wake Zone

Division: Enforcement

Action Needed: Approval of Proposed Rule/Action

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 30 Minutes

Background

The petition to designate Causeway Bay on Echo Lake as a "no-wake" zone, filed by Dorothy Veseth, Sue Hutz, Karen Kolar and Eugene Hutz, was received in a timely fashion. Echo Lake, located about 12 miles southeast of Kalispell, is a closed basin lake primarily fed by ground water with no outlet. Causeway Bay is located on the northeast corner of the lake. The entrance to Causeway Bay was exempted from the 200-foot no-wake rule in 2009 by the FWP Commission to allow boats to travel directly in and out of the bay without having to reduce to no-wake speeds through the narrow entrance to the bay. There are both motorized and non-motorized boaters recreating in the bay. Given the small size of the bay, wave action does contribute to shoreline erosion. There are conflicts among motorized boaters, non-motorized users, property owners and anglers. The recent high water levels in the lake resulted in significant damage to the Causeway Road on the north end of the bay.

Public Involvement Process & Results

No formal public involvement so far.

Alternatives and Analysis

No Action

- Pro: 1) Boaters would be allowed to continue recreating in the bay. 2) The entire lake would be treated the same with no exceptions to individual parts of the lake.
- Con: 1) Petitioners concerns would not be addressed. 2) There would continue to be damage from wakes on shorelines and public roads. 3) Conflicts between boaters and homeowners would continue. 4) Boaters would no longer be able to operate at an above wake speed in the bay.

Implement Petitioners' Proposal

- Pro: 1) Petitioners concerns are addressed. 2) Eliminates the uncertainty of an emergency rule being implemented.
- Con: 1) Could lead to other requests for exceptions to other bays and areas on the lake. 2) Limits recreational use on the lake by motorized boats above a no-wake speed.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

While FWP has no recommendation on initiating rulemaking or denying the petition, it would be nonetheless beneficial to seek public comment on this issue.

Proposed Motion

- I move the FWP Commission initiate rulemaking as written in the petition. Or,
- I move the FWP Commission deny the petition.